



Photo/LORI EMMERSON

## Speaking out against crime

Residents gathered Saturday morning to a symposium on crime at Parkview Village. Here, Cathy McAllister from Victim's of Crime through Community Services addresses the crowd. At right is MP Bill Attewell, who sponsored the series of town hall meetings.

## Region

# Politicians threaten to cut off dump groups after speech

In an attempt to bring "unity" to York Region's on-going landfill fight with Queen's Park, a Whitchurch-Stouffville resident may have jeopardized funding for anti-dump groups across the region.

Dave Probert, former chairman of the Environment Not Economics (ENE) ratepayers' group, angered regional politicians in Newmarket last Thursday when he told them during a delegation their "silence and loss of community co-operation" between municipalities is harming the dump fight issue.

Probert, in criticizing Markham's mayor and its task force in particular for "not knowing" what was going on in neighboring towns, was consequently slammed by politicians for his apparent "lack of knowledge" on the dump fight issue.

Probert's speech, which was an attempt to unite the region's front against a Metro-shared, 600-acre dump on York's doorstep, backfired when council threatened to cancel funding to all anti-dump groups in York Region.

Richmond Hill mayor Bill Bell told Probert if groups were as "unappreciative" as he said they were, that perhaps York should withdraw funding efforts to them.

York Region pays 50 per cent of all registered

groups' dump fight expenses up to a maximum of \$100,000.

"Maybe we should re-think our contributions and funds to these groups," Bell said.

The mayor later said his comments were made hastily and out of anger and said York remains committed to helping groups fight the dumps.

And Markham councillor Carole Bell questioned whether Probert was actually an "active member" of the ENE group.

"The reason I ask this is that the comments he has made lead me to believe he has missed the activities in the region all these many months. There has been co-operation and the most excellent communication for the 20 years I've been involved in environment issues. This most recent issue has been the most publicized community effort I've ever seen," Bell said.

Bell said York Region groups and municipalities have joined together on numerous occasions to unite for the cause and suggested Probert didn't know what he was talking about.

"What more can we possibly do," Bell said, pointing out that Markham has two recognized environmental groups and committees "working hand in glove" with other municipalities.

- Tracy Kibble

## Main St. businessman Mills turns 80

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neighbors. When two acquaintances who are members of the York Regional Police walked through the door, he quipped "Are you going to throw me in jail?"

Mills, a father of two with five grandchildren, still takes the short walk from his home next door to his shop five mornings a week. He closes the doors at 4:30 in the afternoon, but will come in evenings or weekends if there's an emergency.

Born in Toronto's old Cabbagetown area and raised in that city's east end, he moved to Stouffville with his wife Joyce in 1950. He continued the long commute to his job as a general helper at Eaton's in Toronto's downtown until setting up business in 1961. "I used to have a lunch with the optometrist who worked for Eaton's," he said of his introduction to the field.

"After I came back from being a military policeman in the army in World War Two, he took me up to work with him. Soon after that, I got my optician's licence after taking three weeks of training with an ophthalmologist. They didn't have schools for it back then."

Mills eventually established himself in Stouffville, acquiring a faithful customer base. An ardent Christian, he credits God for any success he has had. "God's been good to me, he operates my business, and he's looked after me through the years," said Mills, who once played the trumpet in a Toronto Salvation Army band.

Mills, whose wife died three years ago, likes to see his antique-themed shop as a gathering place for his friends. "People come in and they sometimes just like to sit and talk."

He has witnessed consider-

able change in Stouffville during his 43 years here. He recalls the days when Main St. was tree lined, with regular horse shows in the town park. In those days, he said, Beanie Lehman, a legendary figure in Stouffville, was the town's bread man.

But progress hasn't robbed the town of its essential warm character, he insisted.

"The town has changed, but the friendliness is still in the town. But you've got to be friendly yourself to get friendliness in return. And the help is there if you need it."

Mills said he intends to continue to hand a shingle "as long as the Lord enables me, as long as my mind is sound."

"It's the type of business where you have to be on top of things. It can be complicated sometimes, you have to know what you're doing."

## Region

# Junket costs York ratepayers \$9,000

LISA QUEEN  
Metroland Staff

York Region wasted \$9,000 on a private weekend retreat at the Nottawasaga Inn in Alliston last week, Vaughan Mayor Lorna Jackson said recently.

But deputy chief administrative officer Alan Wells defended the getaway, arguing council needed a retreat to work on a vision to carry the region through the next 30 years.

Any consensus from the retreat will be instrumental in helping the region formulate a strategic vision and official plan, he said.

But Wells' arguments didn't convince Jackson.

"I felt we could accomplish as much by having a couple of days of meetings here in the council chambers and everybody go home at night," Jackson said after Thursday's council meeting.

"It's going to be outside the region at more expense than what was necessary."

Wells said he checked with six facilities within York Region, including Georgina's Briars Inn and Country Club and Seneca College in King Township before booking Nottawasaga.

He said the facilities in York were either booked or didn't meet the region's needs.

Nottawasaga was the least expensive of the three facilities Wells checked outside the region.

Thirty councillors, staff and consultants headed up to the Alliston inn after the Feb. 25 council meeting.

They stayed overnight Thursday and Friday nights and returned home Saturday, according to Wells.

Wells called the costs "minuscule" compared to the benefits the region will gain by completing an official plan and strategic vision.

Council has been unable to adopt an official plan in its 22-year history but is now promising a document before the municipal elections in November 1994.

Costs for the retreat are in addition to the \$97,000 the region is paying Intersol Consulting Associates for formulating the strategic plan.

Wells said it didn't make sense for the retreat to be held in the council chambers because people will be interrupted by phone calls and other distractions.

"Surely we're mature enough not to be running off to the phones," said Jackson, who did not attend the retreat because of prior commitments.

"I think it's a waste of money."

## Residents await tax hike

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a two-year period starting Jan. 1992. Town staff received one installment on Jan. 1 last year and a subsequent installment Jan. 1 1993.)

Top town officials have confirmed the \$133,000 needed this year has not been set aside, and will likely be paid through a tax increase. Although the figures have not yet been confirmed, and although the budget is still being worked out, that could mean a three per cent tax hike to cover the salary increases for 1993. The mayor has also indicated the town's unexpected fight with Queen's Park to keep a dump out of the municipality will also come directly out of taxes. After York Region forked over half the town's \$70,000 tab, Stouffville is still left with a \$30,000 deficit.

That could account for another half a per cent hike.

That, so far, totals 3.5 per cent.

And officials say the town will feel their share of the pinch for York's upcoming 911 emergency system, the \$63.5 million regional headquarters and welfare costs.

In light of these indications made by officials, Whitchurch-Stouffville homeowners could be looking at a minimum four per cent hike. Residents will add to that a proposed 7.4 per cent hike at the regional level; another seven per cent from the local hydro commission and a speculative 12 per cent increase from the education board.

Stouffville's budget won't be finalized until the end of March.

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